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ABSTRACT

This resource book, designed as a planning tool for demonstration project directors, discusses the following six key elements which have application at all three stages of a demonstration project: (1) Objectives, (2) resources, (3) endorsement, (4) communications, (5) evaluation, and (6) outreach. Each of these elements is discussed within the context of demonstration projects regarding plan, operation, and replication. Each chapter is organized into a discussion of the essential elements, action steps for implementing the elements by stages, and an activities checklist. Project directors may also use this guide to determine the adequacy of activities in the operational phase of a demonstration project. (Information in the guide is based on a mail survey response from 54 federally funded exemplary project sites in the spring of 1976.) (LAS)

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Research and Development Series No. 117

ORGANIZING AND CONDUCTING DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

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The Center for Vocational Education intends to increase the ability of diverse agencies, institutions, and organizations to solve educational problems relating to individual career planning and preparation. The Center fulfills its mission by:

- Generating knowledge through research
- Developing educational programs needs and outcomes
- Evaluating individual program needs and outcomes
- Installing educational programs and products
- Operating information systems and services
- Conducting leadership development and training programs

FOREWORD

Persons who direct or plan to direct vocational education demonstration projects should find this resource book useful. It may be used (1) to write plans for the implementation of a project on a local school site or (2) to manage a project after it has been funded. This guide focuses on selected key elements which are critical to the success of a demonstration project with three developmental stages: plan, operation, and replication. Some of the elements are the identification of realistic objectives, the selection of competent staff, and the use of valid evaluation techniques. The guide does not substitute for formal educational coursework in the writing of behavioral objectives or in the use of sound evaluation methodology. Rather, it is a brief, insightful overview of selected activities which, if performed, should contribute to the successful continuation and replication of a demonstration project.

The recommendations in this resource book are based on data collected from federally-administered Part D Exemplary Project sites funded between 1970 and 1973 from the Vocational Education Amendments (P.L. 90-576). Information from the sites was collected by mail survey and supplemented with personal interviews of selected project directors. More information on the research findings may be found in the final report entitled **The Influence of Selected Organizational and Administrative Variables on Continued and Extended Use of Exemplary Projects in Vocational Education.**

We appreciate the assistance we received from the numerous project directors, teachers, and administrators at project sites who responded to the data collection requests of this research project. Site visits were made to school districts in 11 states where perceptions were shared regarding the Part D demonstration projects.

We wish to specifically acknowledge the assistance received from members of the steering committee: James Hugueley, Director of Project SPAN, Memphis City Schools, Memphis, Tennessee; Ronald McCage, Director, Research and Development Section, Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education, Illinois Office of Education, Springfield, Illinois; and Charles Mojkowski, former Director, Educational Information Center, Rhode Island Department of Education, Providence, Rhode Island. Their comments greatly improved this publication.

We extend appreciation, in addition to the authors of the demonstration guide, to Paul Shaltry of The Center staff, who made a major contribution to the revision of this publication.

Robert E. Taylor, Director
The Center for Vocational Education

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INTRODUCTION

The effective communication of a good idea in a form that can be used by other people requires a knowledge of demonstration activities and an understanding of the process by which people accept new ideas. In this guide book information on how people accept new ideas is incorporated in the discussion of six selected elements of three developmental stages. The developmental stages of a demonstration represent different phases in the organization and conduct of an exemplary project. The stages are: plan, operation, and replication. This guide should be consulted as early as possible for its value is greatest in the planning of demonstration projects.

The Three Developmental Stages

The **plan stage** includes the time when an idea is being developed for demonstration purposes. This stage is concerned with establishing relationships among the principal actors in the project and determining the conditions for successful project operations, the next stage of the demonstration project. A plan for the operation of the project is written during this stage.

The **operation stage** marks the beginning of the project—day one. At this stage the plans developed become a reality, and adjustments are made to accommodate unforeseen demands on the project staff.

The **replication stage** represents the final phase in the life of a demonstration project. In one sense, this stage becomes the goal of all demonstration projects because funded time lines run out. The demonstration, however, lives on in the sites of other school districts.

Figure 1 shows these three developmental stages of a demonstration project intercepted at two major junctures: the first, the allocation of funds to operationalize the project plans; and, the second, the initiation of demonstration project activities at other sites. These junctures are interventions in the life of the project which significantly change the conditions of demonstration. The allocation of funds signals that people are to be paid and that the scope of work is to be perfromed. Accountability immediately becomes a concern. Juncture two—other sites—suggests the need for technical assistance from the demonstration site to the second generation site and adaptation in the tasks demonstrated to accommodate conditions at the new site without destroying the intent of the original innovation.

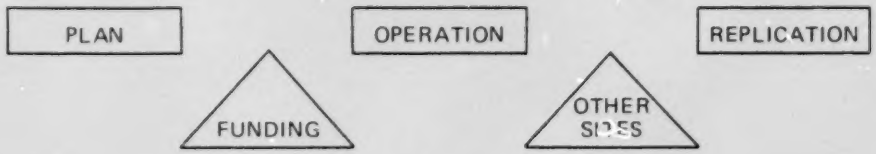

Figure 1. Demonstration Project Stages

The system for disseminating validated project results needs improvement in most states. Funds made available for demonstration projects usually extend over a three-year period.[1] However, the mechanism for providing technical assistance to new sites is not yet in place. Networks of demonstration centers geared to the project results they are disseminating and to the needs of other school districts offer one of the most promising opportunities on the horizon of vocational education.

The Six Key Elements

This resource book is intended to increase a project director's knowledge of effective demonstration practices by discussing six key elements:

Key Elements	Attributes
1. Objectives:	Objectives should be clear, concise, realistic, and acceptable.
2. Resources:	Resource expenditures should be budgeted, monitored, combined in unique ways, and allocated effectively.
3. Endorsement:	Project endorsement starts during the planning phase, comes from key leaders, and encourages the acceptance of the project results.
4. Communication:	Communication should be selective for special audiences, clear, direct, informal when appropriate, and designed to achieve a specific purpose.
5. Evaluation:	Evaluation should be conducted in a manner which is efficient and which yields valid and reliable information for guiding project decisions.
6. Outreach:	Outreach activities should provide demonstration project information to target audiences and stimulate field-initiated requests.

Each of these elements is discussed within the context of demonstration projects: plan, operation, and replication. Information in this guide is arrayed by chapters as in Figure 2. Each cell in the figure contains **action steps** for the organization and conduct of a demonstration project. Following these action steps, a checklist is used to summarize the chapter and suggest future activities. Thus, each chapter is organized into (1) a discussion of the essential element, (2) action steps for implementing the element by stages in a demonstration project, and (3) a checklist of activities.

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[1] In 1968 Public Law 90-576 authorized expenditures of vocational education funds at the state and national levels to demonstrate results of exemplary projects.

Elements	Plan	Operation	Replication
1. Objectives			
2. Resources			
3. Endorsement			
4. Communication			
5. Evaluation			
6. Outreach			

Figure 2. Organization of the Material in the Demonstration Guide

These elements are not mutually exclusive; however, each represents a salient feature of a demonstration project. Their inclusion in this guide was determined by results from a companion research study.

The information in this guide is based on a mail survey to 59 of the federally-funded exemplary project sites in the spring of 1976. The study was conducted by The Center for Vocational Education pursuant to a grant (G00-75-01704) from the Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education, U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. A full report of this survey may be found in The Center's publication, R&D Series Number **116**, entitled **The Influence of Selected Organizational and Administrative Variables on Continued and Extended Use of Exemplary Projects in Vocational Education.**

Summary

Project directors may use the information in this guide in two ways: (1) to prepare plans for the organization and conduct of exemplary project demonstrations or (2) to determine the adequacy of activities in the operational phase of a demonstration project. Project decisions are always matters of judgment. Questions from the field frequently call for flexible actions and the pursuit of immediate goals. However, the concepts in this guide are intended to bring some stability and systematic procedure into an otherwise hectic process.

OBJECTIVES: SETTING THE SIGHTS

As one sage put it, "If you don't know where you're going, it doesn't matter how you get there." OBJECTIVES for your demonstration project become the reason for its existence and the basis for criteria for judging the success of the project. A successful project attains objectives. Therefore, it is important for you and your staff to agree on the objectives. Other individuals such as your supervisor or the director of evaluation may want to assist the staff in setting the objectives. Usually, these are established during the planning stage of the project. If the project represents a response to an RFP (Request for Proposal), the objectives should be consistent with the intent of the sponsor.

"OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT SHOULD BE CLEAR, CONCISE, REALISTIC, AND ACCEPTABLE."

The objectives should be compatible with the goals of the school district. Sometimes "selling" may be necessary. For example, if you are planning a demonstration project on career education in a district which has traditionally sent most of its young people to college, an educational campaign may be in order. Parents and board members are not likely to look with favor on a project spending money on objectives perceived to be of limited value.

Objectives should grow out of a local needs assessment. School districts are unique: each develops from a history of programs and personnel. What is reasonable to expect in one situation is not in another. For example, in one district teachers may be paid to attend summer classes to become familiar with the innovation being demonstrated; in other districts, tight budgets and other restrictions may not permit such orientations to take place. Your ability to work with teachers in small-group sessions is likely to influence the accomplishment of project objectives. School districts found to be most successful in continuing exemplary projects on site after federal funds ran out tended to have local needs assessment information available at the time the proposal was being written!

The attainment of incremental, realistic objectives gives you and your staff a sense of accomplishment. It is important to allow for "slack time" in the schedule to perform tasks which were unforeseen at the time the proposal was written. The incremental objectives (objectives determined for the short run) allow you to change directions should new opportunities be identified. For example, a demonstration project on bilingual education may be intended to teach English-speaking youngsters a second language in addition to the project objectives of teaching English to Mexican-Americans. An incremental decision point following a progress report on project activities could provide an opportunity to consider such additional project objectives.

There are many kinds of objectives. Two of the more common types are (1) enabling objectives, and (2) output objectives. They serve different purposes. The enabling objectives let you know if the project is on schedule, if the announcements on the bulletin board are effective, or if the students in the demonstration enjoy their assignments. For example, as an enabling objective, you would want to eliminate any trace of occupational stereotyping in the project. These objectives **do not indicate the output** of the demonstration project. The output is likely to be measured in the numbers of persons influenced or the number of "adoptions" which have occurred in adjacent school districts. Both types of objectives are important to consider in your demonstration project.

Objectives should be written in a clear and concise manner. Long sentences which include more than one task should be avoided in objective statements. They should be brief and to the point: e.g., determine the effectiveness of the visitor interview form (enabling objective). In this case, it would be the evaluator's task to suggest ways to operationalize the term "effectiveness." It is important to write objectives which are precise and specific in order to allow work activities to be performed. There are many references on writing program objectives. You may wish to refer to a book in the Reference section for additional information on writing objectives: **Writing Performance Goals: Strategy and Prototypes.**

The next section of this guide, "Action Steps," suggests ways of writing program objectives at each stage of a demonstration project.

ACTION STEPS

Plan

1. Write objectives focused on durable problems, ones which are persistent and pervasive.
2. Provide local needs assessment data on the plan to support project objectives.
3. Write objectives to be consistent with project activities.

Operation

4. Identify criteria to measure the attainment of the objectives.
5. Adjust objectives as unforeseen problems prevent the achievement of specified results.

Replication

6. Indicate why certain objectives are appropriate for the host school district.
7. Divide the project objectives into incremental stages for implementation with other school districts.

OBJECTIVES CHECKLIST

____1. What district-wide needs will be met by this project?

____2. Can the objectives be attained within the times and funds allocated for the project?

____3. Would a person not associated with writing the project understand the intent of the objectives?

____4. Has your school superintendent or other administrators had an opportunity to review the project objectives?

____5. Do your objectives include the use of project results in other school sites?

RESOURCES: THE MEANS TO MAKE DEMONSTRATIONS HAPPEN

Resources can be viewed as people, time, materials, space, and equipment. They are listed in descending order of importance for most projects. There always are exceptions to rules; for example, projects have been lost to competitors because space was not available when it was needed. However, people are the most important resource for demonstration activities most of the time.

"RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT SHOULD BE ASSESSED, MONITORED, AND CONTROLLED ON A PERIODIC BASIS."

People are important because (1) they are responsible for project performance and (2) observers of demonstrations frequently respond to the personality of the participants as well as the tasks performed. **Education is a labor-intensive activity.** As much as 80 percent of the project funds may be invested in staff salaries. You should give primary attention to writing position descriptions needed on the project and to staffing these positions. Research data collected from demonstration project directors tended to show greater continuation of projects staffed by directors with more years of experience than directors with less years.

Time is another valuable resource. It is limited. Schedules should be designed to maximize the use of time. "Let time work for you" is an important slogan to remember when you devise project schedules. Time is needed to recruit staff, review materials, and arrange for facilities.

Resources should be budgeted based on the tasks to be performed. People should be assigned to tasks for which they are competent. If there is a question of competence, arrangements should be made to test for competence, and reassignment and/or in-service education should then be determined. Declining enrollments of public school pupils and tight finances preclude the recruitment of new staff for many demonstration projects. Furthermore, a demonstration project should use staff who have had prior experience with the tasks to be performed. These experienced staff are likely to need in-servicing only on procedures for relating to visitors, providing technical assistance to other schools, etc.

Expenditures should be monitored at least once a month. This gives you as project director periodic information upon which to base decisions. Monitoring activities may be in the form of project staff meetings, budget printouts of project expenses, or updates of activity flow charts. You can combine information from project staff files with feedback you receive from visitor debriefing forms, comments from the community, and so forth to influence changes in direction for the project.

Undoubtedly, the value of your demonstration project to visitors is enhanced by such conditions at the home school as an exciting new building or a unique setting. Likewise, a cooperative education project located in a metropolitan area definitely presents opportunities for student placement which may be lacking in more rural environments. Unique characteristics of the demonstration site should be noted when explaining the project to others. **Special attention can then be given to features which may be needed in other settings.**

Resources should be effectively allocated. You can take advantage of the unique abilities of individuals to accomplish dual purposes. If your curriculum coordinator happens to possess artistic skills, write a position

description which accommodates these talents. Project reports should be duplicated in a quantity and form which is consistent with the project proposal and needs of the users of these reports. For example, greater impact may occur if instructor teams are prepared to service requests from other school districts than if many pages of orientation material are distributed.

ACTION STEPS

Plan

1. Contact agencies with mutual interests: e.g., business and labor, colleges, or the state education agency, for potential sources of resources.

2. Develop long-range plans (three to five years) whenever possible.

3. Become familiar with the rules, regulations, and funding policies of the local school district. For example, the project plan should budget the increased costs usually associated with hours of in-service after 3 p.m.

4. Develop short-cut formulas for estimating cost requirements, e.g., total staff costs equal 145 percent of salaries (this would include costs of overhead and personnel benefits).

Operation

5. Keep staff informed of expenditures and solicit their input for long-range projections.

6. Explore the possibility of cost-sharing with school districts requesting technical assistance.

Replication

7. Budget funds to assist other school districts in the use of project results.

8. Prepare a brief description of project expenditures as a guide for implementing project results.

RESOURCES CHECKLIST

____1. Does the plan contain position descriptions and allocations of staff time for project activities?

____2. Does the schedule contain time for existing staff to acquire new skills?

____3. Has the Business Manager approved the final budget for the project?

____4. Is the project plan responsive to the needs of the local school district?

____5. Are other school districts likely to adopt the results of this project?

ENDORSEMENT: APPROVAL FROM RECOGNIZED LEADERS

Endorsement of the demonstration project results by credible people or organizations can become an effective tool in the hands of a skilled project director. Endorsement actually starts long before the first day of the project. It begins with the prior relationships brought to the planning sessions by the prospective project director and his/her staff. Staff persons should be knowledgeable about the school system and be respected by their peers.

"ENDORSEMENT OF THE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT BY CREDIBLE PERSONS IS NECESSARY FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE END."

Prior to naming the writing committee, an analysis of the local school district situation should be made by the person initiating the project. **Only persons who can contribute to the content of the project and who are respected by their peers should be placed on the writing committee.** It is a good idea to invite representatives of community groups to serve on this writing committee if their endorsement is desired. Volunteer community service organizations have a contribution to make if the project involves the use of community facilities. Labor and business leaders can offer helpful suggestions for the conduct of demonstration projects.

The support of students and project participants is absolutely essential. Many demonstration project observers such as teachers and administrators from other school districts, business leaders, and others rely on the reactions of students to determine project strengths and weaknesses.

If the project has potential for controversy in such areas, for example, as the stereotyping of cooperative education students, individuals who are attuned to these concerns should be placed on the advisory committee.

Obtaining and maintaining support is not only important for conducting the project; it is essential if the project is to become part of the school system.

Develop a positive relationship with individuals and groups who are in a position to pass judgment on your project. These groups include board of education members, school counselors, teachers, principals, students, parents, and community leaders. Positive attitudes can be developed by providing periodic information about project results; personal relationships are not always essential. In fact, a close friendship with a school board member could bring charges of undue influence on board decisions. **The newspaper is a good means of influencing community attitudes toward the project.** Information can be provided about people who visited the project with occasional feature articles on special project results. Other means of informing persons in the school system about the project are circular letters, announcements on bulletin boards, or telephone calls. You can also update key individuals regularly with a progress report on noteworthy accomplishments. An informal conversation over a cup of coffee can sometimes result in greater advocacy for the project than pages of printed information.

ACTION STEPS

Plan

1. Involve representatives of citizens' groups in the writing of the plan.

2. Include in the project proposal written endorsements from state agencies, the local board of education, and others.

Operation

3. Invite opinion leaders to serve on an advisory committee to assist in the conduct of the project.

4. Provide an opportunity for the local superintendent to mention project results at staff meetings, civic clubs, etc.

Replication

5. Send awareness information about project results to the superintendent of schools and/or the director of vocational education in other school districts.

6. Ask the teacher or others actually involved in the operation of the project to provide technical assistance to other sites.

ENDORSEMENT CHECKLIST

____1. Were persons who can facilitate the operation of the project involved in the writing of the plan?

____2. Does the superintendent or the assistant superintendent agree with the intent of the project?

____3. Are you using the informal network of friends to communicate information about the project?

____4. Do students enjoy participating in the demonstration?

COMMUNICATION: A TWO-WAY PROCESS

Communication is a **two-way process** between a sender and a receiver of a message. The message is **encoded** into symbols, usually in the form of language which must be **decoded** by a person or persons who are the object of the message. This brief description of the communication process suggests many considerations for demonstration project communications. Among these are the following:

1. All messages should have a target audience,
2. Target audiences are unique. Thus, the messages should be appropriate to the specific nature of that audience,
3. Considerations such as (a) the timing of the communication, (b) the form of the communication, and (c) the location of the project director's office are likely to influence project impact.

"THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT SHOULD FACILITATE COMMUNICATION."

Many types of communication can be effective in the operation of a demonstration project. Formal communications, such as a letter from the project director, tend to carry with them the weight of the person's title or position. There are times when formal communications are needed. For example, a memo from the superintendent announcing the initiation of the demonstration project communicates to others his/her awareness of the project and tacit approval of its operation. However, most of the time **informal communication channels are best**, because people like to interact free from the encumbrances of organizational titles and positions. Peer interaction represents one of the most effective means of telling your story of the demonstration project.

Selection of a target audience for a message is a critical event in the life of a demonstration project. Messages are sent for different reasons. General announcements designed to make people **aware** and **interested** in the project can be sent to mass audiences. Newspaper feature articles, news releases, radio announcements, general fliers, and newsletters are all vehicles for mass communication. These avenues, however, are less useful if you are trying to influence people to implement the demonstration itself.

School building principals are among the persons most important to your demonstration project. They control the schedules of teachers and students. Frequently, these schedules must be adjusted if demonstration projects are to function smoothly. Another important audience is the local teacher association. The endorsement of this group can influence the degree of cooperation you receive from teachers on demonstration activities.

If you are trying to influence a school principal to try some of the ideas in the demonstration, it may be best to talk with him/her informally. It is sometimes necessary to isolate a busy person from phone calls and other interruptions. Therefore, a luncheon meeting or after school chat may be among the best times to communicate your message.

Adapt the message to the audience. A common mistake made by some project directors is the indiscriminate use of communications to wide varieties of audiences. Persons in the community want to know about the impact of the project on student growth. For example, they may want to know if this project is going to better prepare youth for employment. They are probably not concerned about the operational details of the project itself. Teachers from a prospective adoption site, on the other hand, are likely to be very interested in instructional materials and procedures which have been found most effective with students. Attention to the felt needs of audiences, resulting in special communications to them, is likely to pay big dividends toward the acceptance of the project.

The timing and form of the communication influences its impact. If a school principal has recently received some bad news, or if he/she is preoccupied with a serious problem, your project is not likely to receive much attention. The project director must develop a sensing skill which flashes mental warning signals whenever such danger signs appear.

The format of a printed information piece makes a difference. It should be attractive, easy to read, and the appropriate size for the purpose served. You wouldn't expect to read 20 pages in order to obtain a brief understanding of the aims and purposes of a project. Likewise, you would expect more than a five-page evaluation report if you were assessing the possibility of implementing the demonstration project in a different school setting. The form should be appropriate for the intended message of the communication.

The project should be located in the central office of the school district if the intent is to demonstrate its effects within each of the school buildings. Of course, the location depends upon the size of the district and the size of the demonstration project. Sometimes, excellent results can be obtained by placing the demonstration project under a principal's supervision within a school building. This would be true only if the project demonstration was relatively self-contained within the building. In general, the higher up the organizational ladder, the more prestige is associated with work on the project.

ACTION STEPS

Plan

1. Specify channels for communication either in the plan or in the operational procedures for the project.
2. Identify dates and events for release of public information about the project.

Operation

3. Schedule project staff meetings once a week.
4. Develop flyers or newsletters on a regular basis to special groups such as teachers and community agencies.
5. Tap the informal communication network by using respected leaders in project assignments.
6. Make available reports documenting the impact of the project.

Replication

7. Mail awareness literature to other school districts periodically.
8. Schedule presentations on conference programs for target audiences such as school superintendents.
9. Ask demonstration teachers to talk to teachers in other districts.
10. Send announcements of coming events to state education agency personnel.

COMMUNICATION CHECKLIST

____1. Does the project director report to the highest appropriate person in the school district?

____2. Do project activities make prospective adoption sites aware of project results?

____3. Are all administrators in the district **regularly** made aware of project schedules and plans?

____4. Is the medium appropriate for the message and audience?

EVALUATION: INFORMATION FOR USER'S DECISIONS

Evaluation is a process which provides information for decision making. In the case of a demonstration project, evaluation procedures should clearly establish the desirability of using the results of the demonstration Persons seriously interested in adopting the demonstration for their school system want to know its effect on students, its costs, and what it demands in terms of staff competencies among other criteria.

It is useful to distinguish between project goals and the goals or objectives of students who may be participating in the demonstration project. These two sources of information should not be confused. The project may have as a goal the development of student employability skills. You must measure student skills to determine if the project objectives have been met. However, the student may or may not be interested in employment at the time he or she is participating in the project.

"EVALUATION PROVIDES INFORMATION FOR INCREASED USE AND SPREAD OF DEMONSTRATION PROJECT RESULTS."

Your demonstration project probably includes the adoption or use of project results in other school districts. A summative evaluation procedure which indicates the achievement of this goal is necessary.

Evaluation procedures should be relatively cost efficient in their operation. Most projects in the $100,000 to $300,000 range should not spend more than 10 to 12 percent of their budget for evaluation. Evaluation procedures should be streamlined to cause as little disruption as possible. One way of doing this is to collect data from relevant existing records. Data such as achievement test results, early school-leaver records, and reading scores may reflect baseline performance prior to the start of a demonstration project. Existing, unobtrusive data have the advantage of not being influenced by the demonstration project activities. Naturally, a decision must be made about the reliability and validity of existing data for your specific project objectives.

Some products are easier to demonstrate than others, because some are more tangible than others. For example, it is relatively easy to demonstrate the desirability of a new clean-up procedure for students in shop classes. One can observe the orderliness and efficiency of the procedure and the cleanliness of the shop following the demonstration. On the other hand, it is very difficult to demonstrate the viability of a student manual on career guidance since it is not easily observed. The difficulty of the situation, however, does not eliminate the need for evaluation.

Incremental assessment of the progress of a demonstration project toward its objectives is essential for formative evaluation. Successful methods for demonstrating the product need to be identified for continued use and development. There are many ways of monitoring a demonstration project, including some of the following:

a. use of a visitor's rating card

b. periodic interviews with staff or students

c. questionnaires sent to other sites where the demonstrated practice is being implemented.

Some of the best sources of information about demonstration projects are the potential users themselves. Observers are likely to have immediate and perhaps definite reactions to what they see. The astute evaluator will record these reactions and determine which ones are consistent with the intent of the project. If inconsistencies are noted, then adjustments to the project objectives and/or the communication methods should be made.

ACTION STEPS

Plan

1. Focus evaluation on measurable outputs.
2. Determine the record keeping needs of the project.
3. Plan to use outside consultants for review.

Operation

4. Use existing school record data whenever possible.
5. Monitor demonstration activities regularly.
6. Check project operations against specified incremental objectives.

Replication

7. Obtain feedback from observers on possible adaptation of project results to their school setting.
8. Collect evaluative information on project outputs which indicates the strengths and weaknesses of adopting the demonstration in other settings.

EVALUATION CHECKLIST

_____1. Does the evaluation plan provide for opportunities to adjust the objectives of the project?

_____2. Does the evaluation plan provide data for periodic reports to the school administration and the public?

_____3. Does the evaluation plan relate project activities to student performance?

_____4. Will a third party evaluator be selected?

_____5. Have the instruments been reviewed to protect the rights of human subjects?

_____6. Have the criterion variables been operationalized?

_____7. Is the progress of the project being monitored?

OUTREACH: SPREADING THE MESSAGE TO OTHERS

A demonstration project requires an audience if it is to result in educational program improvement. This audience should be on site and in other school districts. Thus, procedures must be developed to stimulate inquiries, if people are not knocking on your door. How do you do this?

There are many means of stimulating requests for information. The chapter on resources mentions the value of a proactive project director with a pleasing personality. Also, you will need to engage in some promotional activities such as sending out newsletters. Traditionally, educators have tended to remain relatively hidden within the confines of their school building. A demonstration project requires staff who enjoy meeting visitors and who are willing to tell their story to others.

Build linkages to agencies who are in a position to refer others to your project. These include state departments of education, colleges and universities, intermediate school districts, and others. State departments of education receive requests for information every day on topics which are of vital concern to other school districts. Your project name, address, and phone number should be available for referral purposes.

"THE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT SHOULD MAINTAIN A PROACTIVE STANCE REGARDING OTHER SITES."

Mail informative literature regularly. A mailing list is indispensable to a demonstration site. Newsletters, special invitations, announcements of special events, etc., should go out to people who have exhibited an interest in your project.

Prepare packages of information which describe your demonstration. Personal appearances at civic clubs or school functions are to be desired over printed information; however, costs may not permit extensive travel. Therefore, it is wise to package your story in audiovisual form. One of the most popular presentations is a slide-tape which briefly describes the benefits of the demonstrated product. Brochures soliciting future inquiries about your project should accompany the presentation.

Maintain an "open door" policy on the home site. This suggestion requires much effort on your part. Visitors sometimes show up unexpectedly. Or when they arrive, you discover they do not understand the intent of the project, and that what you have to offer is not relevant to their needs. A demonstration requires much flexibility on your part and a willingness to spend time with people helping them to determine needs and solutions to their problems. Time spent in clarifying needs in other school districts is a valuable contribution to their program and should be documented in your records evaluation file.

Monitor the records of outreach activity for the purpose of stimulating additional inquiries if necessary. Examples of outreach records are:

a. a log of phone calls

b. a log of visitors, with addresses and phone numbers

c. agendas for visitors

d. a visitor reaction sheet containing comments about the demonstration project, technical assistance team, trip reports, and a correspondence file.

It is sometimes desirable to identify one specific staff member who will monitor all visits.

ACTION STEPS

Plan

1. Write a detailed dissemination plan which specifies target audiences and technical assistance procedures.

2. Provide for project activities to be performed in a variety of situations, enabling visitors to identify aspects of the program which are relevant to their home needs.

Operation

3. Develop procedures which make it easy for visitors to contact your project.

4. Arrange viewing schedules to allow visitors with special interests to spend more time with selected staff members.

5. Package selected materials to distribute free to visitors.

Replication

6. Develop an information brochure which emphasizes selected features of the project.

7. Provide teams of demonstrators to go to prospective adoption sites on request.

OUTREACH CHECKLIST

____1. Have you identified a geographic target area from which you anticipate requests?

____2. Will your project be open to visitors at a convenient time?

____3. Is technical information on the project in a form ready for visitor inspection?

____4. Is the project director available to talk to visitors?

____5. Are sample materials from the project ready for distribution?

SUMMARY

This guide book was designed as a planning tool for demonstration project directors. It may be used to determine the adequacy of operational demonstration activities. Each of the six essential elements have application at all three stages of a demonstration project: the plan stage, the operation stage, and the replication stage. The appropriateness of these elements for your demonstration project will depend upon the intent of the project, the relative emphasis placed on certain tasks and activities, and the type of audience you are attempting to influence.

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